

CONNECTICUT COUNCIL on  
**PROBLEM  
GAMBLING**  
www.ccpg.org

The Mission of the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling is to reduce the prevalence and impact of problem gambling on individuals, families, and society.

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**Public Testimony:** H.B. No. 5331 (RAISED) AAC Consumer Protection  
S.B. No. 0190 (RAISED) AAC The Department of Consumer Protection

**Date:** February 23, 2016

**Presented By:** Tamara L. Petro, MPH, Executive Director  
CT Council on Problem on Gambling, Inc. (CCPG)

**Presented To:** Honorable Members of the Committee on General Law

Good morning, Members of the Committee, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Tamara Petro, and I am the Director of the CT Council on Problem Gambling (CCPG). Some may be familiar with us but the CT Council's mission is to reduce the prevalence and impact of problem and pathological (disordered) gambling on individuals, families, and society. To be clear, being an affiliate of the National Council on Problem Gambling, we take a neutral stance on legalized gambling.

We are not here to testify for nor against the existence of legal gambling. We fully recognize the economic concerns of some, and the autonomy of a business to conduct and market its business. We are here to represent the Council's primary concerns, and to be a voice for the issues of prevention for problem gamblers and their families, who must be considered when making legislative decisions on expanding gambling or locations.

Specifically, we are advocating to create a Responsible Gambling Advisory Council within the Department of Consumer Protection. We propose that the new era of gambling in CT necessitates a sustainable framework for Responsible Gambling and consumer protections, and that the State has a responsibility to provide this while looking to gambling for revenue.

The purpose of the Advisory Council will be to further Best Practices for Responsible Gambling programs and to promote awareness, education and prevention and research, through strategic state and community partnerships. Comprehensive representation would include designees of the Governor, Majority and Minority members of both the Senate and the House, the Commissioners of Consumer Protection, Aging, Children and Families, Corrections, DMHAS, Public Health, the Mohegan Tribe of Indians of CT, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe and the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling.

The proposed Responsible Gambling Advisory Council DOES NOT represent an increase in spending. Rather, it would utilize the existing portion of the Chronic Gamblers Fund that is 5% already designated to the CT Council on Problem Gambling. This will enable CCPG to provide basic administrative and operational support to facilitate the monthly meetings of the Responsible Gambling Advisory Council and provide its organizational expertise on Responsible Gambling standards as the CCPG currently does with tribal casinos.

Further, we are recommending that funding equal to three-percent (3%) of Yearly Gross Keno Sales inclusive of all outlets be established to enable the Responsible Gambling Advisory Council to establish a program for the promotion of responsible gambling in the state. The program shall provide prevention and educational services designed to increase awareness of and reduce the prevalence of problem gambling. An expansion of legalized gambling including Keno and at least one new casino will correlate to an increase in problem and underage gambling. Certain populations will need extra attention and services. The parties represented by the Advisory Council would best reflect the needs of some identified affected populations.

Again, I want to thank the Committee Chairs and the entire Committee for the opportunity to speak today on behalf of the CT Council and those individuals and families for whom the CT Council advocates.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Help Is Available: **Call (888) 789-7777 ~ Text (847) 973-5685**  
**16 West Main Street ~ Clinton CT 06413 ~ 860-664-3996**

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## Responsible Gambling: 2016 Legislative Initiatives

### Awareness

**Point-of-sale Availability**  
Facts ~ Access ~ Help

**Co-occurring Advertising**  
TV / Radio / Billboards

### Education

**Responsible Gambling**  
Local Program Teams

**State Conference on**  
Problem Gambling

### Prevention

**Community-based**  
Education & Training

**24 hour Live**  
Gambling Helpline

## Responsible Gambling Advisory Council

### Collaboration ~ Implementation ~ Sustainability

- \* Within the Gaming Division of the Department of Consumer Protection
- \* Inclusive Representation: CT Council on Problem Gambling, Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut, Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, Dept Aging, DMHAS, Corrections, Public Health, DCF, Governor, DCP & Consumers
- \* Funding equal to 3% of Yearly Gross Keno Sales Inclusive all outlets
- \* Utilize existing streaming of the 5% of the Chronic Gamblers Funding

### Accountable ~ Transparent ~ Responsive

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The Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling was founded in 1980, becoming the first affiliate of the National Council on Problem Gambling. CCPG is currently funded by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and the Mohegan Tribal Nation. Each tribe supports CCPG's efforts to provide prevention, education, awareness, advocacy and research, as well as the State's Problem Gambling Helpline. Additional funding is provided by the CT Dept of Mental Health and Addiction Services-Problem Gambling Services through the Chronic Gamblers Treatment Fund (supported by the CT Lottery Corp and the Pari-Mutuel Industry), which enhances the effectiveness of CCPG programs and services to address problem gambling in the state.

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## **Responsible Gambling Advisory Council.**

(a) There is established, within the Department of Consumer Protection, a

Responsible Gambling Advisory Council which shall consist of the following Sixteen (16) members

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Two members who shall be the designee of the | Governor                                |
| • Two members who shall be the designee of the | Commissioner of Consumer Protection     |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | Senate President Pro Tempore            |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | Senate Minority Leader                  |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | Speaker of the House                    |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | House Minority Leader                   |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | Commissioner on Aging                   |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | Commissioner of Children and Families   |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | Commissioner of Corrections             |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | Commissioner of DMHAS                   |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | Commissioner of Public Health           |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | CT Council on Problem Gambling.         |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | Mashantucket Pequot Tribe               |
| • One member who shall be the designee of the  | Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut |

The Commissioner of the Department of Consumer Protection shall appoint a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson from among the members of the council. Members shall serve for a term of three years or until their successors are appointed, whichever is later. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority for the position which has become vacant. Members of the council shall not be compensated for their services. Any council member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings or who fails to attend fifty per cent of all meetings held during any calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned from office.

(b) The advisory council shall:

- meet monthly, and at other times at the call of the Chairperson
- promote Responsible Gambling awareness, education, and prevention
- implement programs and services to improve responsible gambling practices,
- Monitor Responsible Gambling practices as impacted by legalized gambling in the state,
- study additional issues and from time to time issue reports on matters related to responsible gambling

(c) The Responsible Gambling Advisory Council shall establish a program for the promotion of responsible gambling in the state. The program shall provide prevention and educational services designed to increase awareness of and reduce the prevalence of problem gambling. The Commissioner of the Department of Consumer Protection may enter into agreements with nonprofit organizations to assist in providing the program of services as established by the Council, provided not less than thirty-five percent of the amount received pursuant to subsection (e) of this section shall be set aside for a contract with the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling.

(d) The CT Council on Problem Gambling shall provide administrative and operational support services to the the Responsible Gambling Advisory Council.

(e) The program established by subsection (c) of this section shall be funded by:

1. Existing funding of 5% of the Chronic Gamblers Fund designated to CT Council on Problem Gambling.
2. An amount equal to three percent (3%) of the revenue generated by Keno after subtracting prize payments.